

U.S. to Keep Running South African Bases

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The State Department said yesterday that the United States plans, at present, to continue operating its two satellite tracking stations in South Africa, despite a South African warning that Negro Americans cannot be employed there.

The warning, which came in a speech by Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd last Friday, has surprised American officials. Verwoerd said that his country's racial policies applied to the American tracking stations.

The tracking station agreement between the United States and South Africa, however, contains nothing about racial policy, either written or implied.

Further, no Negro Americans are now working at the

stations nor has any attempt been made to send any there, so far as is known.

In response to newsmen's questions yesterday, State Department spokesman said the United States "surely" planned to keep the tracking stations in operation "under present circumstances."

This leaves open the possibility that the policy could be changed by political pressures here or in South Africa.

Analysts of South African affairs believe that Verwoerd made his statement for domestic political reasons, rather than for foreign effect.

Of the two tracking stations, the Defense Department operates one and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration the other.

The Defense station employs about 50 American technicians, almost all civilians, and about 25 South Africans.

The NASA station has only one American, a liaison officer. The other employees are South Africans. Some of the South Africans are non-white—although Verwoerd does not want Negro Americans to work there.

In an earlier incident,

South Africa warned it would refuse to allow the American aircraft carrier Independence to land Negro crewmen in South Africa, even though they had been briefed on board ship to follow local custom when they went ashore on leave. The Independence's visit was canceled by the United States.

South Africa, however, has recently announced that it will begin recruiting mix-blood "coloreds" for its own navy. A naval expansion program has caused a shortage of manpower.

South African officials also have been boycotting American diplomatic functions in South Africa. These affairs include all races and are held in the U. S. Embassy, which has diplomatic immunity and is technically American territory.

The United States has been confronted with a similar situation in various Arab countries, where Arab officials protested the presence of U.S. military personnel of Jewish faith.

An official said yesterday that this issue hasn't come up recently, however. He said that United States policy is opposed to any kind of discrimination.